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EDITORIAL

A New Era for Korea-Japan Relations

SHOJI Tsutomu

1984 marks the 100th anniversary of the Protestant Church in Korea and the 200th anniversary of the Korean Catholic Church. Looking back over the history of Korea-Japan relations, one is brought to an awareness of the fact that the President of Korea, Chun Doo Hwan, is slated for a state visit to Japan. Responding to Prime Minister Nakasone's invitation, President Chun will be in Japan between September 6 and 8, 1984. This is the first time for a President of Korea to have an official audience with Emperor Hirohito.

Japan's mass media has been speculating on whether or not the Emperor will "apologize" to President Chun relative to Japan's aggressions and war responsibility.

Unfortunately, the encounter between the Emperor and the President will most likely gloss over the reality of Japan's ruthless colonization of Korea before and during World War II, and the fact of economic exploitation of Korea by Japan today.

We must learn from what Japan did to the People of Korea during the colonial period and through an apology for its misdeeds of the past, we should move toward a change in Japan's economic exploitation of Korea today so that relations between North and South Korea can be normalized through a deintensification of the Korea-US-Japan military alliance. History testifies to the fact that Japan exploited North Korea as well, and we cannot treat that nation again as an enemy. We believe that the Japanese government should initiate talks with North Korea which should start with an apology for the aggressions of the last war and the prior colonization.

With these thoughts in mind I was afforded the opportunity of studying the history of Korea-Japan church relations. During the beginning years of the 20th century Christian leaders in Japan discussed politics with a passion. But the most unfortunate reality in all of this is the fact that their fundamental premises were deeply flawed. Their preconceptions placed Japan at the head of the Asian Alliance and that therefore Japan's expansionism should be affirmed and Christianity should take a significant role in completing this national task. From those conceptional beginnings, the

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Rev. WATASE Tsuneyoshi, of the Japan Kumiai Christian Church understood Japan's expansion into Korea to be "God's plan", and the church's mission to be Japanizing Koreans through evangelism. Within the church, the orientation of the Rev. KASHIWAGI Gien was rare for he attacked Japan's injustices perpetrated in the destruction of Korean independence and criticized the mission work of the Kumiai Church in Korea.

The Rev. WATASE had said, "Koreans will become Japanese by becoming Christians." These fundamental errors in thought on the part of the Japanese church continued up until the end of World War II and were translated into practice through cooperation with the Japanese government's imperial designs in Korea.

Japan's defeat in World War II did not instigate any meaningful reflections on the part of the Japanese church as to its role in the colonization of Korea. But at last, in 1965, when the Japanese government formalized a treaty with the South Korean Government which did not include an apology but a rationalization for Japan's colonization of Korea, the Japanese church began to recognize the injustices of the treaty and its own duplicity in the aggressions against Korea. Then in September 1965, when the Rev. OMURA Isamu, the then United Church of Christ in Japan moderator, attended the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, he made a public apology for the sins perpetrated against the people of Korea by the Japanese church during the colonial era. In 1967, the Confession of War Responsibility was issued by the

next moderator SUZUKI Masahisa. In 1973, when the democratization movement led by Korean Christians came to full flower, concerned Japanese Christians formed a movement that has continued to help the people of Korea establish true democracy in their land.

This Christian movement in Japan has expanded to many local communities throughout the land. As a result of these movement efforts the following things have been learned by Japanese Christians:

1. Korean Christians struggled against the imperial designs of Japan and in the process were witnesses to their faith. The majority of Japanese Christians did not even try to understand this thinking and even tried to correct such attitudes. Most Japanese Christians never shared in the pain and suffering of their neighbors, supporting their own warped faith while failing to recognize their own deeply ingrained sin.
2. The main issue for Japanese Christians is related to where we see God at work; among the ruling elite who oppress the masses of the people, or among the suffering people who struggle to find hope as they bear the burdens of oppression. The former understanding is to be found in the thinking of the leaders of the Japan Kumiai Church as it developed its mission program in Korea based on the idolatrous worship of state power, while the

latter understanding is represented by the Rev. KASHIWAGI as he called the policies of the Japanese into question.

3. The Christian leaders of the Meiji-Taisho era did not retain a value system which could see beyond the very narrow bounds of nationalism and ruling class enforced state power. Do the Christian leaders of Japan today have such a value system? Are Christians in Japan able to respect and protect human rights, justice, and freedom from the point of view of the oppressed? Are we able to see the Jesus Christ that came to be with the oppressed as He sought justice for all?

1. There is a trend in Japan to divorce political issues from all involvements in Korean relations. However, the history of Korea-Japan church relations is one deeply colored by national politics. We have created relations with Koreans of faith who are struggling for justice and democracy in their land. Therefore, it is impossible to retain contacts with these faithful without coming to grips with the inherent political issues.

"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies..... But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream."

(Amos 5:21 & 24)

Without political involvements in the

problems of justice, there can be no genuine or meaningful Korea-Japan relationships.

SET OF SLIDES AVAILABLE ON THE MARUKIS AND THEIR ART WORK

A single day after the explosion of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, Iri and Toshi Maruki went to hunt for Iri's mother in the agony of that hell on earth. As a result of that experience they decided to render into art what they saw on that fateful day. Out of anger toward those who would cause such extreme misery, they executed their twelve mural-size Hiroshima Panels, and in Saitama Prefecture, Japan, they built an art gallery to house these magnificent works.

In 1968 the Hiroshima panels were taken to the United States under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee. A woman upon seeing the exhibition said to the Marukis, "My son died in the Pearl Harbor attack. 'No more Hiroshimas', what you are expressing here is onesided!" The Marukis told the woman that they intended to create another set of panels depicting the death of American prisoners of war in the Hiroshima holocaust. The woman was greatly surprised to learn that Americans were also killed by that same atomic bomb blast.

While the Marukis were in the United States they were deeply moved by the young people who worked so hard to sustain the exhibition in spite of the

great sentiment against it. Through this the Marukis found others who sincerely hoped for peace, and their anger toward all Americans gradually melted away. After the artists returned to Japan their powerful panels remained in the United States another eighteen months for continued exhibitions.

Upon their return they started to collect information on the thirty-three American prisoners of war in Hiroshima at the time of the bombing. What they discovered to their shock was the fact that these Americans had been tortured to death by their angered captors, the Japanese. In confession of their guilt as citizens of Japan, the Marukis completed their thirteenth panel, "The Death of American POWs."

The last bodies to be removed from the streets after the blast were those of the Koreans who had died. By the time the bodies had been removed, crows had already eaten out the eyes of those dead Koreans. In repentance for this, the Marukis created their fourteenth panel entitled "Crows."

The artists also realized that they had yet to express the reality of Japan's invasion of China. They made inquiries of Chinese friends and discovered the horror perpetrated there by the Japanese army. They felt compelled to express this story of extreme cruelty, and thus began their fifteenth panel, "The Rape of Nanking."

What barbarism war creates! Out of their desperate longing for peace, came the sixteenth panel entitled "Auschwitz." They believe that peace can

only come with confession of one's sins of aggression.

They continue to produce art work which deals in substance with themes of barbarism and peace, with war and the inhumanity of people to people. Themes range from the entire spectrum of twentieth century brutality and barbarism of which example after example abound.

Iri and Toshi Maruki have won the highest national and international awards for their artistry depicting the barbarism of this century. They have dedicated their art and their lives to the making of peace.

There is now available a set of slides containing fifty-six frames, a script, and a cassette taped sound track, which is based on this story and the artistry created by the Marukis. The set is available in both Japanese and English, with the Japanese version narrated by Toshi Maruki herself. The set can be rented through the NCCJ and it is also available for sale at 20,000 yen per set. It has already had a very powerful impact both in the United States and Japan. It has also been used in other countries of the world. The program is about 30 minutes in length with the narration backed by 16th century cathedral music themes. The sets can be rented for 3000 yen.



SOME OBSERVATIONS ON AUGUST 15

IMAI Mari
Christian Political League of
Japan

August 15, 1984, the 39th anniversary of Japan's defeat in war, was a long and hot day. I was born after the war and only know about it from secondhand sources. Recently new facets of the war have been discovered and reported, such as the Japanese military's use of poison gas and information relating to the Singapore massacre perpetrated by the Japanese.

On August 15, of every year, there is a Peace Prayer Service at the Chidorigafuchi War Memorial in Tokyo, starting at 7 AM. In this memorial park there is a tomb stone that symbolizes the war dead. On the evening of the day before, a prayer service was held near the tomb by the Association of New Religions. Also at noon on August 15, there was a service sponsored by the Japan Socialist Party in conjunction with several national labor unions. Labor union members and National Diet representatives who support the present Constitution of Japan (Peace Constitution), attended the service. People from different religions came together at the memorial tomb for peace prayers. While the service was in progress people would continue to move in and out, offering prayers in either the Shinto or Buddhist forms.

However, it was strange and unquieting to find a police patrol car in the park with several plain clothes detectives among those in attendance.

The Chidorigafuchi Park is

located near the Yasukuni Shinto Shrine, which before the war was the National Shrine for the war dead. Before its denationalization, the shrine was under the supervision of the now defunct Imperial Army and Navy, and all military personnel who had been killed in wars, were enshrined here as "gods", without exception. The standard catch phrase among the soldiers was "See you in the Yasukuni Shrine after we give our lives for the Emperor."

After World War II the Yasukuni Shrine became an independent Religious Juridical Body under the new constitution. In 1969, the Liberal Democratic Part (conservative governing party), tried five times to change the law governing the Yasukuni Shrine, so as to nationalize it and make it supportable from government funds. This clear violation of the separation of religion and state clauses of the constitution, was opposed by religious groups, labor unions, and citizens' groups. However, there has been an upward spiral in right wing pressure to institute official worship at the shrine on the part of government related dignitaries, Ministerial Cabinet Members, the Emperor, and other state functionaries and organizations.

On August 15 of this year, the Prime Minister, along with fifteen of his cabinet members paid homage at the shrine in an official capacity. Two cabinet members visited the shrine on August 14. Therefore, a total of seventeen out of the twenty-one cabinet members made visits to the shrine in official capacities. The Liberal Democratic Party has now made it clear that any worship at the shrine as an official act

is to be considered constitutional, and there has been organized a special committee to give official sanction to that position.

Japan's constitution provides for separation of religion and state, however, in preparation for constitutional amendments that it is trying to institute, the Japanese government is endeavoring to make official public worship at the shrine an established fact, regardless of the constitutional provisions to the contrary.

In 1981, under the administration of Prime Minister SUZUKI, August 15 was set aside as a peace prayer day for commemoration of the war dead. However, the observances of these commemorations completely ignore the fact of Japan's invasion of other countries and seeks instead to glorify war. Further, it goes without saying that religious observances on the part of the state are basically contradictory in nature.

Just before noon on August 15, I visited the Yasukuni Shrine. There were many people there at that time. The commotion of the summer cicadas echoed under the hot noontime sun. In the shrine grounds there were more than ten buses and cars sporting overpowered megaphones, and uniformed rightist youths were marching with military flags in hand. Besides this there were six huge buses containing a large police task force contingent, and plain clothes cops were everywhere. I thought to myself that if this situation were to be reenacted on the grounds of a Christian Church or Buddhist Temple, we would be suffering under police state

conditions, or at least the event would be equivalent to a very powerful gangster's funeral. I felt a cold shiver racing up my spine as I noticed the nonchalance of people in the presence of such a powerful show of police force on the grounds of what is supposed to be a religious institution.

In the Budokan Hall, very close to the Yasukuni Shrine, a ceremony was held from 11:50 AM with the Emperor in attendance. On the grounds of the Yasukuni Shrine the ceremony taking place inside the Budokan Hall was televised and people were asked to "meditate at noontime in unison with the Emperor." At the same time the National High School Baseball Tournaments were interrupted for the same noontime meditation. The meditation was followed by the Emperor's sonorous words, and after this Prime Minister Nakasone proceeded to the Yasukuni Shrine grounds.

Using ropes, the police task force guarding the Prime Minister prevented protesters from venturing too close to the North Gate where the Prime Minister was to pass. I asked one of the cops there why as a citizen I am excluded from walking in the roped-off area. Without wincing, the retort was, "You may have an explosive in your purse." This overprotection of government officials by the confluence of police forces left a very unpleasant feeling in my heart.

If the Prime Minister is really concerned about promoting peace, he should make a conscientious reevaluation of Japan's disastrous military past and work to decrease the country's dependence on

military preparations. In this light, the remilitarization of Japan along with her economic invasion of other countries are the foci of criticism from other countries of Asia.

We must learn to share the pain and suffering of other people's lives caused by poverty and starvation, and should lay down our arms in order that we can take action relative to solving the problems of maldistribution of wealth and the nuclear threat to human survival.

No peace will come to the world out of an excessively overguarded visit of Prime Minister Nakasone to the Yasukuni Shrine, on the occasion of the end of World War II.

KOREA-JAPAN RELATIONS: FORGED ON THE ANVIL OF DISTRUST

(The following is a translated summary of an article that appeared in the Asahi Shinbun on August 19, 1984. It was authored by KOBAYASHI Keiji.)

Anyone that has visited Korea recently will go away deeply impressed with the great changes that are taking shape in Seoul, the capitol. Korea is rushing headlong and stretching every fiber and nerve to prepare for the 1988 Olympic Games. August 15 of each year, marks the liberation of Korea from Japanese occupation back in 1945, but this year the same anniversary was called "The 3.1 Independence Day." There was less criticism of Japan heard this year than in previous years.

On August 15, 1982, people took

the opportunity to look back over 36 years of suffering under Japanese occupation and colonization, with so many relating bitter memories of being forced by the Japanese military government to change their names from Korean to Japanese. But this year there were very few words heard from President Chun about "Japan as the state which oppressed our people." Last year KBS (Korea Broadcasting Company) aired the "Rape of Nanking", but this year the special program was the story of a Japanese boy whose father was Korean, looking for his roots in Korea. The emphasis of the drama was the establishment of new relationships between Korea and Japan.

However, on the afternoon of August 15 this year, students who are in opposition to the visit of President Chun to Japan, argued that Japan has, up to the present, been completely unwilling to apologize for past mistakes.

Nineteen years ago Korea-Japan relations were normalized, but it seems to me that Korean distrust of the Japanese becomes stronger with each passing year. The reasons for this widening gulf of distrust are derived from basic differences in understanding, with the Koreans being very sensitive and cautious about Japan's remilitarization.

For the last ten years, poles of the people of the Republic of Korea, indicated that Japan was the most disliked country next to North Korea. In order to reduce this distrust of Japanese harbored by the Korean people, Japan should reexamine itself in the light of these realities by returning to the

S. Korean Christian Groups

July 24, 1984

Oppose Chun's Japan Visit

SEOUL (Asahi Shimbun)—Christian youth groups here came out strongly Monday against South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan's visit to Japan in September, branding it as an act of anti-national sellout diplomacy only in the interests of his regime.

The Korean Student Christian Federation and the Ecumenical Youth Council of Korea said in a joint statement that the Japanese ruling class had never made a serious apology for the past atrocities committed against the Korean people and their imperialistic and aggressive nature remained fundamentally unchanged.

Calling the Emperor of Japan a war criminal, they said they were dead set against a meeting between him and Chun.

The statement marks the first time that formal objections have been raised against Chun's trip to Japan within South Korea. The two Christian groups, reportedly with a

combined membership of nearly 800,000, are the core of the student and youth movement in the country, and their opposition to the president's trip will have major repercussions.

Violent protest demonstrations may be staged on school campuses when schools open for the new semester in September.

Branding the proposed visit as an act disregarding the pride and cause of the Korean people, the Christian groups said Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone had vaguely referred to the past when he came here in January last year, as other Japanese officials had done in the process of normalizing relations between the two countries, but Japan had never evinced thorough self-reflection on its historical crimes.

They also claimed that Koreans living in Japan were being fingerprinted against their will and were suffering from

various other forms of racial discrimination.

Expressing strong concern over security links among South Korea, the United States and Japan, the statement said that judging from Japan's moves following the normalization of Tokyo-Seoul ties, one of President Chun's key objectives in visiting Japan was to forge the trilateral relationship.

The statement, putting greater stress on indicting Japan's past than opposing Chun's trip, is a notable manifestation of smoldering anti-Japanese sentiment in South Korea.

The Ecumenical Youth Council of Korea, which reportedly claims to have a membership of 700,000, is scheduled to hold memorial events commemorating the 100th anniversary of Protestant missionary work, starting on Aug. 15. Severe criticism of the government of President Chun is expected to be renewed during these functions.

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(Cont. from p. 7)

peace and democracy movement which was generated out of Japan's defeat at the end of World War II.

NEVER AGAIN - JAPANESE WOMEN AGAINST WAR

On August 15, 1984, in commemoration of the gasping end of World War II, the Shibuya Station area in Tokyo saw the Fourth Annual Speech Marathon held between 10 AM and 7 PM. Women took turns speaking out against war and the growth of nascent militarism, providing a cloud of witnesses for peace, that cried out to the ends of the earth. The marathon speaking took place from on top of a minibus parked before the station square.

"Not only soldiers, but

countless other people died in Japan, Asia, Europe and the South Pacific Islands."

"This is the way that the war ended, but the womens' struggle has just begun. There are still many many women who are living with lingering memories of the horrors of war and the loss of loved ones."

" Even if we have to fill the prisons of our land with the beaten bodies of mothers, daughters, grandmothers, and great grandmothers, we vow that we shall never allow war again."

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